

Not every school district in this country needs more teachers. Not every school district in this country has a terrible school building. Some school districts need more computers. Some school districts want to expand their language programs. Some school districts want to expand their dance programs. Some may want to expand their math programs. That decision should be made at the local level. Only the parents, only the teachers, only the principals really know what a local school district needs in order to make it a better place for kids to learn in. We don't know in Washington.

Yet, the President and his friends and his supporters seem to feel that they know best, that they can run all the school districts in this country out of some building down here on Constitution Avenue. It doesn't work that way.

If we really want to help out local school districts, what we will do is relieve them of having to fulfill the obligations of the Federal Government by paying the costs of special education and free up those dollars so that the local school districts can spend them where they see fit, where they feel they will get the best return. If we really want to help local education, what we will do as a Congress and what the President should be suggesting is that we will fund the special education needs of kids in this country to the tune of 40 percent, which we committed to.

Ironically, if you take the dollars being proposed by the President to be spent on his new categorical programs where he tells everybody in the country how to run their school districts, and you add them up, in 5 years—which is the goal that we have set as a Republican Congress—in 5 years, you will be at just about the 40 percent that the Federal Government said it was going to spend on special education. If you take those dollars and you move them over to special education, you will be accomplishing what we said we were going to do back in the 1970s. But, more importantly, we will be freeing up the local school districts to educate kids the way they know they must be educated rather than the way some bureaucrat down here in Washington thinks they should be educated.

That is the difference. That is what the debate is about. The Republicans believe that schools should be operated at the local level, that it should be the parents, the teachers, and the principals who make the decisions on education. Regrettably, some of our colleagues on the other side, and clearly the people down on Pennsylvania Avenue, feel that they know better than parents, teachers, and principals—they should be the ones operating our schools.

This is not a dollar fight. It is not a question of putting more dollars in education. It is a question of where the dollars go, how they are better managed, how they can give the best return

for the dollars spent for education which we need.

So there is the difference.

The Republican Congress is showing the right way. We have put our money in the right programs. We have committed to special education the huge increase in spending. I just wish the President would join us in that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

Mr. GORTON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all the debate time on the 2-day continuing resolution be yielded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the order, the joint resolution is passed.

The joint resolution (H.J.Res. 135) was considered read a third time and passed.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 4 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may go over that 5-minute limit by not to exceed an additional 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEBATE OVER EDUCATION

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I can do no better than to echo the eloquent remarks of my friend and colleague from New Hampshire. The debate over education today is not a debate over its importance. It is not a debate over the relative commitment of Republicans and Democrats to increase the educational opportunities for our children. The debate, as we have it today, is over who determines how and where that money should be spent—bureaucrats in Washington, DC, or the parents, teachers, principals, and elected school board members in thousands of school districts across the United States. That debate is a vitally important one.

In his 1997 state of education speech, Secretary Riley said, "We should not cloud our children's future with silly arguments about Federal Government intrusion." But that is exactly what this debate is about. It isn't silly, and it couldn't possibly be more important.

Secretary Riley may feel it very natural that he and the President and his

bureaucrats in the Department of Education here in Washington, DC, should set those priorities for all of the thousands of school districts across the country. We do not. We believe in the wisdom of school board members and in the dedication of principals and teachers and parents to the quality of their children's education.

I want to emphasize once again, the President in his budget this year asked for \$31.4 billion for education. The budget passed by the Senate of the United States has \$31.4 billion for education. Later, the President came back and asked for an additional \$1.1 billion. Republicans have agreed that that \$1.1 billion is appropriate.

But in negotiations, of which I have been a part, the President has narrow prescriptions for the use of that \$1.1 billion. In fact, when I looked at the statutory language that the President's people asked for, the first two lines were about the appropriation of \$1.1 billion. All of the rest of the language was designed to restrict the discretion of State and local education agencies in connection with the spending of that \$1.1 billion, narrowly focused on teachers, focused even more on teachers in the first three grades; subject to the rules and regulations of the Federal Department of Education at every possible turn, the distribution formula and the set of rules already adopted for the spending of money from the pot into which this \$1.1 billion is to go, according to the President. The formal rules take up just 15 pages of regulations—perhaps 15 pages too many. But the nonregulatory guidance for those regulations is another 171 pages. And, of course, there would have to be additional regulations on top of those, and additional guidance on top of those, for this program as the President has recommended it.

In its publication called "Education At The Crossroads," the Education Committee of the House of Representatives reports that there are now 760 Federal education programs, requiring something over 48,600,000 hours of paperwork per year—48,600,000 hours of paperwork. We simply need not add to that burden. Mr. President, 90 percent of those hours now paid for out of the education budgets of our school districts and of our States, 90 percent of those hours could be far more profitably spent on additional instruction for our students or the money spent on improving the physical quality of our schools or the equipment that our schools and our teachers use to train our children. But those moneys are now spent meeting the regulations of the Federal Government accompanying the modest amount of money—some 7 percent to 8 percent—the modest amount of money that the Federal Government supplies as against the States and local taxpayers for the maintenance and the instruction in our public school program.

We, on the other hand, without a debate with the President over the